Production of Lead-free Petrol

3727. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) Whether the Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited has signed an agreement for collaboration with M/s. Snam progetti for transfer of technology to produce tead-free petrol;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) whether the use of lead-free petrol is likely to help reduce pollution caused by use of petrol with lead content and what steps are contemplated to produce such lead-free petrol on such a large scale so as to eliminate the use of petrol with lead content?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY . OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL , GAS (CAPT SATISH SHARMA) : (a) and (b) Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited has signed an agreement with M/s. SNAM PROGETTI, Italy for obtaining a process license to manufacture 30,000 TPA of Methyl Tertiary Butyl Ethera at its refinery in Bombay. The estimated cost of the project is approximately Rs. 32.7 crores and would toe implemented in about 33 months.

(c) The steps for achieving reduction in lead level in Petrol so as to reduce pollution include the setting up of Reformer Units at Digboi, Barauni, Mathura Refineries and de-bottlenecking/modification to the FCC Units at HPCL's Bombay Refinery besides the setting up of 30,000 TPA of MTBE project at BPCL Refinery, Bombay.

Implications of dual pricing of LPG and Kerosene Oil

3728. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALVIYA: SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH :

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) What are the basic objectives of deeanalising LPG and kerosene Oil and what are the implications in the dual pricing system of this commodity;

(b) Whether Government are aware .hat this would lead to-large scale black-marketing of the products; and

(c) if so, in what manner Government propose to check it ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA) : (a) to (c) In order to increase the availability of LPG and kerosene in the country in addition to what is available at controlled prices through Public Sector Oil Companies, Government has decided to allow their import and sale at market prices by private- agencies. Measures to prevent diversion of lower priced products have been incorporated in the system. These include, apart from the provisions of various control orders, imparting of a colour to the kerosene sold through public distribution system and prescription of different design and capacity for LPG cylinders, valves and pressure regulators for private sector marketing.

Investment of surplus funds in Foreign Banks

3729. SHRIMATI SARALA MAHESHWARI: SHRI M. A. BABY :

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that public sector units are not allowed to invest their surplus funds under portfolio management schemes in foreign banks prior to 1992;::'"

(b) whether it is also a fact that Public Sector Oil Units parked thousands of crores of rupees in foreign banks;

(c) if so, under what authority various PSUs, specially ONGC and IOC did invest their surplus funds in foreign banks in 1990-91; and

(d) whether any punitive action has been taken against erring officials?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA) : (a) to (d) Funds surplus to their requirements only were invested by

PSUs in accordance with the investment policies evolved by respective Boards of Management under the guidelines of the Government. The investments were made under powers delegated by the Board.

LPG Distribution Centres in West Bengal

3730. SHRI RATNA BAHADUR RAI : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of LPG distribution centres, district-wise in West Bengal; and

(b) what is the criteria for the opening of LPG distribution centres ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA) : (a) 228 as on 1-1-1993.

(b) LPG distributorships are opened at places with a population of 20,000 and above, in a phased manner, subject to product availability, provided the location offers adequate potential to sustain an economically viable distributorship.

Decanalisation and dual Marketing of Kerosene, LPG and Diesel

3731. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) by when decanalisation of the import of kerosene and LPG dual marketing are likely to start;

(b) whether it is a fact that the dual marketing for diesel is also likely to be introduced; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA) : (a) Kerosene and LPG have already been allowed to be imported by private entrepreneurs. Time by which im port of these products under parallel mar keting may start will depend upon the initiative and efforts of private entrepre neurs,

(b) and (c) There is no such proposal.

Sanctioned Quota of Kerosene for Bihsr

3732. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA : SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL ALIAS MEEM AFZAL:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that kerosene in Bihar is used for lighting and cooking as well as for running pumps for irrigation purposes;

(b) whether it is a fact that kerosene quota of Bihar is much less than that sanctioned io other states;

(c) whether it is also a fact that population of Bihar is more than 10 per cent of the total population of the country whereas its quota of kerosene is even less than 6 per cent;

(d) if so, whether Government would supply kerosene to the State in accordance with its demand immediately; and

(e) by when and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA) : (a) Kerosene is used for both lighting and cooking purposes.

(b) to (e) SKO is a deficit proauct in the country. Allocation to States are made on historical basis. Due to constraints of import capacity and foreign exchange, it has not been possible to increase the allocations to States/UTs and rationalise per capita consumption of SKO in various States.

Oil and Gas Exploration Programme

3733. SHRI MATANG SINGH : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) what has been the progress in oil and gas exploration programme during Seventh Five Year Plan;

(b) the details of programme finalised for oil and gas exploration during' the